



The Front Porch

The Newsletter of the City of Springfield,
Planning and Development Department's
Neighborhood Conservation Office
Spring/Summer 2001 Issue

Mission:

Neighborhoods are the building blocks of our community. Springfield must strive to promote strong neighborhoods that instill pride in their residents. Therefore, the Neighborhood Conservation Office is committed to working with the Community to ensure strong viable neighborhoods.

Police Academy Seeks a Few Good Citizens

Are you interested in learning more about your Police Department? If so, a good opportunity is coming your way. Springfield's Police Department is gearing up for its next **Citizen's Police Academy**.

This academy is a comprehensive overview of the functions of the police department. In each session of the 10-week program, participants are exposed to and informed of the department's wide variety of tasks.

The first academy began in 1998. Since that time, it has had about 100 graduates. These individuals have left with a greater understanding of the work done by Springfield's Finest.

The program includes a variety of rather diverse sessions. They include, but are not limited to, academy training, patrolling, evidence collecting, budgeting, and organized crime investigating.

The academy also provides some hands-on experience. Tours are given of both the Police Headquarters and the Police History Museum, better known as the Calaboose. Students are provided the opportunity to meet with or hear presentations from Police Chief Lynn Rowe and the department's Public Information Officer, Kirk Manlove. The academy also provides an introduction to special programs,

such as COP (Community-Oriented Policing), Neighborhood Watch, and bike patrol.

The spring academy was recently completed with 15 graduates. Now, another class is being formed for this summer. Applications are currently being accepted. The target size for this class will be 12 to 20 participants.

Because classes can fill quickly, early application is recommended.

There are a few basic requirements to take part in the program. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. They must also be free of felony or serious misdemeanor convictions. Criminal history checks will be completed for each applicant.

Classes for this summer are expected to run one evening per week. They will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. in the police training room in Old City Hall.

For more information or to apply to this program, contact Officer Jack Van Matre at 837-5832. Applications can also be made on the Internet at the City of Springfield's Police Web site at www.springfieldmogov.org/spd/cpa.html **Fp**



By participating in the Citizen's Police Academy, individuals will learn about the many activities of the Springfield Police Department, including Bike Patrol.



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City Provides Loans for Home Rehabilitation

Springfield's neighborhoods are graced by a large number of older houses. Many of them stand as a showpiece to the pride that the owners have in their homes. Some, however, are in need of rehabilitation work to restore this greatness.

Too often, people would like to rehabilitate their old home, but they cannot for various reasons. Frequently, homeowners lack the money and think they would have difficulty getting a loan.

If this description fits you, the Springfield Department of Planning and Development has a housing rehabilitation loan program that may be the answer to your problem.

The Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Loan Program has already helped many low-to-moderate income families restore their homes into sources of pride. To date, more than 150 houses have completed this program. There are approximately 20 homes currently undergoing rehabilitation work.

The loan can be applied to a wide variety of projects. Work can be done on the exterior, such as door, window,

carry an incredibly low interest rate of 0 percent-5 percent. The interest rate is determined based on household income.

To pursue participation in this program, individuals must first schedule an interview with city staff. To be eligible your home must be located within a target program area. If your application is approved, then a property inspection will be made. Then, together with City staff, you will develop your rehabilitation plan. The City will take care of the loan paperwork and most other details.



After rehabilitation was completed, the drastic improvement upon the house is clearly evident. Noticeable exterior improvements include a new front porch, carport, siding, and more.

The City of Springfield is currently accepting applications for this loan program. If you are interested in participating, you can call Planning and Development at 864-1038. Staff also can be reached through e-mail at cityrehab@ci.springfield.mo.us, or through their Web site at www.springfieldmogov.org. **Fp**



This Springfield home was badly in need of rehabilitation work. Once accepted to the Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Loan Program, an extensive overhaul was planned.

and siding replacement. The improvements can be internal, such as wiring, plumbing, or kitchen and bathroom remodeling. Work on structural elements, such as roof or foundation repairs, is also eligible under this program.

You may wonder how the Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Loan Program differs from a traditional bank loan. The answer is simple: it saves you money. These loans

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65801



CDBG Funds Provide Needed Community Resources

On April 2, 2001, City Council approved the funding proposals of this year's federal block grant funds. From a grand total of more than \$3 million, the City of Springfield will distribute the totality of these funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

These funds are passed from the federal government to local governments for the purpose of more responsible allocation. Therefore, each community can decide where to best invest these annual resources.

The City of Springfield uses a large portion of these funds for the administration of community development programs and for the fulfillment of City priorities through the housing rehabilitation and small business development loan programs. However, the community is invited to submit proposals for the funding of various projects. The project must conform to a list of eligibility criteria; however, the potential for usage is quite broad.

A large number of proposals were submitted to secure a portion of this year's funds. Of them, 21 were recommended to City Council for approval.

This year's funds include an interesting mix of community services. These services may be directly beneficial to you or someone you know. Some examples are outlined below.

For information on applying for CDBG grant money in 2002, contact the Department of Planning and Development at 864-1038.

Housing Repairs:

Three projects, valued at over \$130,000, will receive funding to make housing improvements. While most work will be concentrated within target areas of exceptional need, some services will be available citywide. All of the funds will serve either to improve housing for low- and moderate-income individuals or to eliminate slum and blight.

The Greater Springfield Board of Realtors, Helping People, Inc. will make 40 emergency home repairs in the next year. Typically, they perform repairs to leaky roofs, porches, water heaters, plumbing, septic tanks, and sewer systems. The purpose is to eliminate potential threats to residents' health, safety, or welfare. For information, call 864-3460.

The Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC) seeks to target 45 homes in Springfield that need weatherization. These homes, which must have a history of high energy usage, will receive investment to install energy conservation measures for improved future efficiency. For more information on this program, call 864-3460.

The Affordable Housing Action Board will be using CDBG funds to provide affordable rental housing for low-income families. This will be done both through rehabilitation of existing housing stock and through construction of new units on vacant lots. To find out more about this program, contact Sherry Gainer at 865-4055.

Disabilities Assistance:

The Southwest Center for Independent Living will be continuing a program called Barrier Removal for People with Disabilities. This program seeks to eliminate architectural barriers that exist within the homes of low-income individuals. Building wheelchair ramps or widening bathroom doors are just two examples. By making all areas more accessible to them, the program will help people gain full use of their existing home. Eighteen households are expected to receive assistance within the next year. If you, or someone you know, may be able to benefit from this program, contact James Barney or Ann Morris at 886-1188.

Food Assistance:

Ozarks Food Harvest will be expanding the Ozarks Food Gardens program in 2001. This program provides low-income individuals the space, tools, training, and seeds needed to grow their own gardens. This project has been extremely successful. It encourages individuals to produce fresh vegetables not only for themselves, but also for others. As a result, the 2000 increase in produce donations to Ozarks Food Harvest totaled more than 100,000 pounds. Therefore, Ozarks Food Gardens provides much needed nutritional staples to the diets of Springfield's low-income youth. For more information on this project, call Bart Brown or Amy Pezzani at 865-3411. **FP**

The Front Porch has enclosed a copy of a brochure from the Council of Churches of the Ozarks. The *Connections Handyman Service* is an outreach effort that provides home assistance to needy people so that they may maintain a livable home for as long as possible. We encourage you to read this brochure and to help identify seniors and disabled citizens who could benefit from this service.

If you have questions or if you would like to request more brochures, contact the *Connections Handyman Service* at 829-5017 or through e-mail at connectionserv@yahoo.com. This service is operated in conjunction with the "Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)."



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Publication Spotlight

“Walnut Street Historic District Walking Tour”

This brochure provides the basis for a pleasant, self-guided stroll through one of Springfield's most treasured areas. It provides information on many of the buildings that you will discover along a walk through this district. Check out the architecture and learn a bit about local history as you get a bit of exercise and fresh air.

Copies of this free publication are available in the Department of Planning and Development, which is located on the 2nd Floor of the Busch Municipal Building at 840 N. Boonville. **EP**

NOTICE: Landscape Awards

Applications are now being accepted for the “2001 Annual Landscape Awards.” All citizens are encouraged to nominate sites of outstanding aesthetic quality located within the City of Springfield.

Nominations can be for all types of sites, including individual homes, retail or office establishments, and more. Past entries have included Creekside Crossing at Elfindale, St. John's Hospital Parking Lot, and Walnut Street Bed and Breakfast.

Entries for this year will be solicited until June 15th. For more information, please contact Ron Carey either by telephone at 864-1089 or e-mail ron_carey@ci.springfield.mo.us



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